/The Chinese/

knowledge of sanitation and elementary health regulations. Their concepts of health and disease rest mainly on the traditional beliefs. The concept that dominates most of their thinking about the human body and its health is that of the Two Principles of yang and yin. These are philosophical concepts of the origin of all things. The yang principle represents the male and the yin represents the female. They stand for opposite poles - heaven and earth, sun and moon, day and night, heat and cold, life and death, positive and negative, strong and weak.

In medicine, everything is classified as yang or yin. The exterior of the body - the skin - is yang, while the interior is yin. The back is yang, while the abdomen is yin. The heart and liver are yang while the spleen, lungs and kidneys are yin. A disease, accordingly, is yang when due to external causes and yin when due to internal causes. Respiratory diseases, fever, and diseases affecting the upper part of the body are yang diseases. Chills and afflictions of the lower body, and circulatory diseases are yin diseases. When the yin predominates, one suffers from yang disease; when the yang is in excess yin results. These two principles must be kept in mind when treating the disease, since the drugs and herbs are also divided into these two classes.

Another Chinese concept concerning health is that of the existence of the Five Elements - metal, wood, water, fire and earth. According to this belief, the human body is composed of a mixture of the five elements. So long as the proportions of these five elements remain in order, health results. If the balance is disturbed, disease follows.

These beliefs are common mainly among the uneducated population, the rural and the lower classes of the urban population. In most cases, the higher classes have a Western knowledge of the basic elements of health and sanitation and know the basic facts of human physiology and the causes of transmission of diseases. Illiteracy and ignorance is much greater in the Northwest region than along the Pacific Coast. Thus, in the Northwest, the beliefs are widespread and most Western ideas have not penetrated into the larger part of the population.

Unfortunately, we do not have figures on the birth and death rate in Northwest China. The figures for all of China are given in the chapter on "Health and Sanitation" of the General China Handbook.

C. Predominant Diseases Among the Chinese

The most common diseases are the fecal-borne ones. They are spread through the use of human waste as fertilizer. Andre Migot, who travelled through Northwest China in 1946, dwells on this problem in his description of a typical middle-sized town in this area (Tibetan Marches, p. 51): "Then there is the problem of sanitation. The total volume of human excrement produced every day

3:Cable & French M-5 (1926) 1927 AF13 Northwest China
Sinkiang AI 1

lighted, as the most sure means of keeping unwelcome guests at bay. The tins of Keating's powder, which we had on order, had failed us with the other stores, but even had we secured them, nothing can finally circumvent these insects, which creep along the rafters and drop from the ceiling on to the hapless victim beneath! We were soon fast asleep, but at dawn a still worse plague faced us, for the walls were black with loathsome flies, and not one moment's peace did we know throughout our Sabbath rest in Muleiho.

The little town was in the proud position of having been lately raised to the civic status of a '*hsien*' city, in consequence of which it now had its own Resident Civil Magistrate, whose new Yamen had just been erected.

A wooden bridge spanned the wide river which rushed by the city wall, and here the inhabitants were wont to gather in the cool of the day, at the hour when all the animals of the city were led down to be watered.

The arable land was extensive and splendidly irrigated, and there was every sign of prosperity. Strings of little donkeys, driven by Turki vendors, constantly passed our inn door laden with baskets of grapes from Turfan. The large black and white grapes were not yet ripe, but the small seedless variety was plentiful and cheap. This is the kind from which the Turfan sultana is produced in such abundance.

A band of children, with whom we made friends, took us up to a court in the Yamen buildings to see a red deer, which had been caught young in the mountains and was being reared in captivity. Its antlers were particularly fine, and we noticed that all the medicine shops of Muleiho were decorated with splendid specimens of such antlers, which are highly valued for medicinal purposes.